

**CITY OF BREMERTON, WASHINGTON
PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM**

AGENDA TITLE: Workshop for 2020 Comprehensive Plan Amendments Docket: Overview
DEPARTMENT: Community Development
PRESENTED BY: Allison Satter, (360) 473-5845 or Allison.Satter@ci.bremerton.wa.us

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Comprehensive Plan Amendment is a change to the City of Bremerton Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the City's long-range plan used as a guide for the physical, economic, and social development of Bremerton.

Comprehensive Plan amendments are processed on an annual cycle as allowed by State Law. As the first step in this process, the City has invited the public to apply for proposed changes from August through November 15, 2019 for this year's amendment docket. After the docket has been established with all the proposed amendments to be considered this year, the Bremerton Planning Commission will provide a recommendation of the amendments to the City Council who will make the final decision.

One amendment is included for the Planning Commission's consideration in 2020 that is City proposed. There was no public request for amendments to be considered this year. The proposed amendment is to establish a minimum net density of six (6) dwelling units per acre (many districts currently allow five (5) dwelling units per acre). This is not any anticipated changes to the maximum density allowed in the City's land use plan.

Amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan are regulated by Bremerton Municipal Code 20.10 which outlines the process and criteria of approval.

This workshop's intent is:

- To summarize the Comprehensive Plan proposed amendment for the 2020 annual Comprehensive Plan docket, and
- Discuss process and anticipated schedule, and preliminary questions that the Commission and the public may have about the annual 2020 amendment.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

Provide direction to Staff on proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment and provide feedback on the anticipated schedule and any questions regarding the process or amendment.

DECISION CRITERIA FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

The City of Bremerton's Comprehensive Plan establishes a blueprint for our future – a document that will guide the City in its decision making for the next 20 years. The Comprehensive Plan provides a set of policies that direct future growth and development. Additionally, the Plan identifies potential strategies that will help effectively guide City leaders in making substantive and thoughtful decisions for the community.

To update this document, per State laws and the City's code (Bremerton Municipal Code 20.10), the Comprehensive Plan may only be updated once a year (with a few exceptions such as a Subarea Plan adoption or emergency amendments to prevent or avoid imminent danger to the public). The City has a window to accept amendment applications for the Comprehensive Plan that is between the first business day of August through November 15th of each year, and then the amendments are then processed the following calendar year.

As Planning Commission is considering the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments, the following must be considered (BMC 20.10.080):

1. In considering the annual amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission shall consider all proposed amendments concurrently to assess their cumulative effect onto the City and the environment.
2. The Planning Commission may recommend and the City Council may adopt or adopt with modifications, an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan if:
 - (a) There exists an obvious technical error in the pertinent Comprehensive Plan provisions; or
 - (b) All the following criteria have been met:
 - (1) The amendment is consistent with the Washington State's Growth Management Act;
 - (2) The amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan or other goals or policies of the City;
 - (3) If the amendment was reviewed but not adopted as a part of a previous proposal, circumstances related to the proposed amendment have significantly changed, or the needs of the City have changed, which support an amendment;
 - (4) The amendment is compatible with existing or planned land uses and the surrounding development pattern; and
 - (5) The amendment will not adversely affect the City's ability to provide urban services at the planned level of service and bears a reasonable relationship to benefitting the public health, safety and welfare.

Planning Commission shall consider the Comprehensive Plan proposed amendments through workshop(s) and a Public Hearing. Following that process, the Commission will provide a recommendation to City Council regarding these amendments. The anticipated schedule for the 2020 amendment docket is as follows:

- **Workshops:**
 - January 27, 2020 (this workshop)
 - February 24, 2020 – Commission Workshop #2
 - Additional workshops through early 2020 if necessary
- **Environmental Review/Agency Outreach:**
 - During February/March conduct environmental review and submit local and state agencies, and the tribes for agency review
- **Public Hearings:**
 - March / April Planning Commission Public Hearing and recommendation to City Council
 - April / May City Council Public Hearing and decision
- **Additional Outreach:**
 - City Council District 4's Community meeting on November 25, 2019
 - Kitsap Building Association's Monthly meeting on January 9, 2020
 - Staff is willing to make other presentations to community groups or answer questions – please contact Allison Satter at Allison.satter@ci.bremerton.wa.us

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS: OVERVIEW

For 2020 annual Comprehensive Plan docket cycle, there is one city-initiated proposed amendment to revise the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed amendment is:

- Establish a minimum net density of six dwelling units per acre.

Many of the City's current residential districts have a minimum net density at 5 dwelling units per acre (DUA) and the maximum densities have a range. This amendment is only looking at the minimum density (no changes to the maximum densities are anticipated). The following districts would require amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and associated Zoning Code to have a minimum 6 DUA as they currently list 5 DUA:

- A. Low Density Residential and BMC 20.60
- B. Medium Density Residential and BMC 20.78
- C. Downtown's Multifamily Residential (1 + 2)
- D. Downtown's One and Two Family Residential

Website links to see the current documents:

- Bremerton Comprehensive Plan:
<http://www.ci.bremerton.wa.us/185/Comprehensive-Plan>
- Bremerton's Zoning Code (Bremerton Municipal Code) and Maps:
<http://www.ci.bremerton.wa.us/399/Zoning-Code-Map>
- Downtown Subarea Plan:
 - <https://www.bremertonwa.gov/371/Downtown>

Why are we proposing this amendment?

Washington State Legislature has passed a bill that encouraged cities to consider establishing minimum densities for all residential districts at 6 DUA.

Most people would agree that affordable housing is a major issue throughout the state of Washington. There is much less agreement, however, on what is needed to address this problem. Recognizing this quandary, the Washington Legislature passed a bill ([E2SHB 1923](#)) to help address the affordable housing issue, which was signed by the Governor and took effect on July 28, 2019

While it doesn't have the mandates included in the original version, E2SHB 1923 is intended to encourage more residential development capacity and increase local governments' emphasis on affordable housing. The bill focuses primarily on cities with populations of more than 20,000, with those cities needing to take formal action — as outlined in the bill — by April 1, 2021, in order to participate.

The first amendment from this State bill that the City is considering is to establish a minimum net density of 6 DUAs.

Other considerations

This proposed amendment is important for the City to consider as the City has a scarce resource of undeveloped and underutilized land. To adopt code to establish a minimum density of 6 DUA, instead of current 5 DUA, will increase the City's assurances that we can provide opportunity for housing for our population growth. Preliminary analysis of this change indicates that it isn't different than the current development pattern that is happening with recent subdivisions. Recent platting activities shows that subdivisions are creating a density of 6 to 7 DUA within the residential districts. If this proposed amendment was adopted, it is consistent with the current development pattern.

ORDER OF THE DAY

Provide direction to Staff on proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment and provide feedback on the anticipated schedule and any questions regarding the process or amendment.